

Message Text

SECRET

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42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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R 201450Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8677

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T BEIRUT 1593

EXDIS

E.O. 1152: XGDS-2

TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJ: GALLAGHER AND DYKES

1. ARMA SAW SURETE DEIRECTOR GENERAL COL. DAHDAH ALONG WITH A NUMBER OF OTHERS MORNING FEB 20 (SEE SEPTTEL). AT MY REQUEST, HE ASKED DAHDAH TO OBTAIN ANSWERS IF POSSIBLE TO A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS:

(A) WE UNDERTAND ONE OF THE MEN IS ILL; WHAT IS THE NATURE OF HIS ILLNESS?

(B) COULD WE SEND IN A MEDICAL SPECIALIST TO TREAT HIM?

(C) COULD WE SEND IN A PACKAGE WITH MEDICINES AND OTHER ITEMS?

DAHDAH NOTED DOWN THE QUESTIONS AND TOOK TWO MORE LETTERS FROM MEN'S FAMILIES FOR DELIVERY. HE MADE ENIGMATIC STATMENT, WHICH ARAM WAS UNABLE TO FOLLOW UP, SAYING HE WAS "STILL NEGOTIATING ON THIS CASE". RE NEGOTIATIONS, ARMA HAD BEEN TOLD IN EARLIER MEETING WITH G-2 HEAD BOUSTANI THAT LIST OF ARMS DESIRED BY PFLP HAD BEEN GREATLY INFLATED. ARMY HAD NOT SEIZED ANTHING NEAR THE NUMBER OF ARMS. ARMA REPLIED THAT IN ANY CASE HE UNDERSTOOD THAT PRESIDENT FRANGIE WOULD NOT PERMIT A TRAD OF THE MEN FOR THE ARMS.

2. ECON/COMMERICAL COUNSELOR SAME DAY TALKED WITH FRANGIE INTIMATE LUCIEN DAHDAH. WHEN DAHDAH EXPRESSED FRANGIE'S ARDENT DESIRE TTO SEE FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN

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RETURN TO LEBANON, ECON/COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR EXPLAINED

INTEGRAL CONNECTION WE SAW BETWEEN SECURITY FOR BUSINESSMEN HERE AND KIDNAPPING PROBLEM AS EXEMPLIFIED BY CONTINUED DETENTION OF GALLAGHER AND DYKES. HE PRESSED DAHDAH TO SEE THAT EMBASSY COULD GET MORE REGULAR PROGRESS REPORTS OF HOW EFFORTS FOR RELEASE OF THE MEN WERE GOING. DAHDAH AGREED TO DO WHAT HE COULD.

3. WE HAVE DISCUSSED QUESTION OF WHY PFLP REFUSES TO PROVIDE INDICATION THAT MEN ARE ALIVE. MANY DIFFERENT OPINIONS EXIST. ONE VIEW HAS IT THAT PFLP MAY FEAR INFORMATION BEING GIVEN OUT BY THE MEN THROUGH CODED MESSAGES. OTHERS DO NOT AGREE. ON ASSUMPTION THAT MEN ARE STILL ALIVE, OUR BEST GUESS IS SIMPLY THAT PFLP ARE VERY TOUGH PEOPLE WHO WANT TO KEEP THE PRESSURE UP. WE WOULD NOT DISCOUNT THEIR DESIRE TO KEEP OPEN THE OPTION OF QUIETLY KILLING MEN AND GETTING RID OF THEM. THIS IS ONE REASON WE HAVE NOT PRESSED HARD ARGUMENT THAT WE HAVE NO INDICATION MEN ARE ALIVE. WE BELIEVE IT MORE PRODUCTIVE TO TELL ALL CONCERNED THAT WE KNOW THEY ARE ALIVE AND HELD BY PFLP OR A GROUP UNDER ITS CONTROL. THIS SEEMS TO BE TACK TAKEN BY SYRIAN AND PLO REPS IN HIGHER MILITARY COMMITTEE AS WELL WHEN QUESTION WAS RAISED (AS ALREADY REPORTED).

4. FOR WHAT SUCH SPECULATION IS WORTH, LET ME MENTION THAT AUB DEAN WHO IS MY LONG TIME FRIEND HAS JUST TOLD ME HE TRIED FEW WEEKS AGO ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE TO APPROACH HABASH, A FORMER COLLEGE ROOMMATE OF HIS, THROUGH THEIR MUTUAL COLLEGE ROOMMATE, A FORMER DEPUTY OF HABASH, HANI EL-HINDI. ACCORDING TO THE DEAN, HABASH TOLD HINDI TO STAY OUT OF THE MATTER AND TO TELL THE DEAN TO KEEP OUT OF IT TOO. IT WAS A POLITICAL QUESTION, NOT HUMANITARIAN. FROM EVERYTHING WE HAVE HEARD, HABASH AND HIS PEOPLE ARE A PARTICULARLY HARD-NOSED BUNCH.
LAMBRAKIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRISONERS WELFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT01593
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760065-0777
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760232/aaaabbdc.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUN 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GALLAGHER AND DYKES
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PINT, LE, (GALLAGHER, CHARLES D), (DYKES, WILLIAM R)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006